

Just a Couple of Teens

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Summary: Let me ask you a question: what have you done to prove you are trustworthy? Because if you think you've done something to prove that to me, then, by all means, please read on. If that really is the sound of utter silence I hear, don't even try it. AU.

## 1. Chapter 1

**\*\*A/N:** Well, here's my next story. As a warning, it might get put on the back burner, as I'm working on about three other stories, but I'll get back to this one as soon as I can! If you read and review, I will love you forever! :-)\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"I miss you,<p>

I miss you,

It's you who occupies my thoughts today,

Did you feel okay?

Just before the lights went out,

Just before your candle was snuffed out?

I'm asking you this now,

Cuz I'm thinking of you, a year ago, today,

Did you feel ok?"

The sun warmed my face as I sang softly to myself, a song I had written and only I had heard.

Despite how close I was with my group, they were NOT allowed to hear any of my un-Viking-like talents.

I wasn't even that close to anyone actually. They don't even know me.

Astrid, Fishlegs, Tantrum, Camicazi...none of them even KNOW me.

They just think they do, because we're all stuck together to survive together because they can't survive on their own.

As for me? Well, I don't know if I could or not, but I know I DEFINITELY should have run away when I had the chance.

It would have been better than facing the exile.

I should have run with him when I could have, instead of sitting around and waiting, all because my dear old man decided to be a father for once in his miserable life.

I swallowed back tears because Hiccup doesn't cry. Hiccup doesn't even have tear ducts and Hiccup has a heart made of steel.

At least that's what I want them to think, and they do.

Hiccup doesn't care that he got exiled from his tribe. Nope, he doesn't care.

Hiccup doesn't have any regrets, he doesn't constantly beat himself up and know his double life came at such a price...NO.

I will NOT think of that.

"Hiccup?" Astrid asked. "You ok?" Out of all the teens that also got placed in exile and now live on a deserted island we call Outcast Island, I like Astrid the best. Her

or Fishlegs.

Camicazi's too loud, Tantrum's bitter and lonely.

When first I came here, there was just one. Me.

Then along came Astrid, exiled from her tribe because she "stood up for a criminal."

She tried to free her father from a Viking prison, that's what she did.

And he was totally innocent, a point she often stressed.

Why was Fishlegs kicked out? Simple: he was a runt.

Being a runt is probably the lowest form of sin to Vikings.

It's seen as a curse from the great god Thor, a sign that you are NOT destined for greatness.

I was a runt too but, surprise, surprise, my dad had a soft spot

somewhere in that black heart of his and decided to let me live.

Fishlegs was just lucky to be born to a tribe who only EXILED runts.

And Tantrum? Her dad was the chief of his tribe, like mine. He exiled her when she very staunchly told him she was marrying whomever she liked. Because she was the heir to her tribe, she was a princess and that meant she was forced to marry someone of her father's choosing.

But she fell for another man, who ended up running off on her after she had been placed into exile. Sounds like a winner, am I right?

Camicazi? Well, she was a special case. She was driven insane a long time ago by the Hysterics, another Viking tribe. They captured her and something they did to her left her never quite right.

It was okay, though...until she began murdering people while they slept, thinking they were more Hysterics, come to finish the job they had started.

When I first met her, I was tempted to finish the job, I admit.

But all it took was to establish a bond of trust with her, much like the trust you can share with a dr-never mind.

The point is, Camicazi trusts us so completely that she would defend us with the same ferocity she once killed her own tribe with.

So now I guess you're wondering about me. Why was I kicked out of my tribe?

Let me ask you a question instead: what have you done to prove you are trustworthy?

Is that the sound of utter silence I hear? Yes, I believe it is.

No, you have not given me any reason to trust you with my deepest secret, the thing I have not even shared with my group. So don't ask. I don't trust you.

I don't trust anyone, except someone who long since died.

## 2. Chapter 2

"Yeah," I told Astrid. "I'm fine."

Astrid nodded, held out her fist and we bumped knuckles.

It's kind of my group's version of a soppy little hug.

Anyway, Camicazi wandered over. She opened her mouth and hissed like a snake.

Astrid smiled at her. "Hey, Cam," she said. "What's up?"

Camicazi told me exactly what those sick freaks did. Now, I'm not going to tell you, because what if there are younger readers out there?

Something they did messed her up so badly her speech is garbled.

She reached out for me. "Hicc...cup..."

"Hey, Cami," I told her quietly. "How you holding up?"

"Leave...soon..."

"What? Why?"

"Wing...flightless...big."

"What the heck is she talking about?" Astrid demanded.

"I have no idea," I said baffled. "You think you can SHOW us what you're talking about?"

Camicazi tugged us along until we reached a small cave where an albino Night Fury crouched, one wing bent awkwardly about her body, clearly injured.

Ahh...so she had meant a dragon.

The Night Fury began to growl at us, clearly scared of what we might do to her.

"What do we do?" Astrid asked. "I mean, we can't just leave it here, but we can't..."

Her voice trailed off.

Our tribes all detested dragons and killed them on principle.

But we hadn't really discussed our opinions of dragons, but I automatically knew mine.

I knelt down next to the dragon and said, "Alright, big girl. Think you can trust me?"

She pulled away.

"Hey, no," I said quietly, holding out my hand. "It's gonna be okay."

She drew away from my hand.

"I'm not gonna hurt you, beautiful," I whispered. "Please just trust me."

I saw the indecision in her narrowed yellow eyes: was I, a scrawny little toothpick of a Viking, to be trusted or not?

I kept my hand out. "I'm not gonna hurt you. I swear."

A split second decision, and her nose was in my hand.

I quickly got down to business. "Ok, what happened, Snowy?" Not very original, but in my stressed-out state, it was the first calming name in my head.

I turned to Astrid and Camicazi. "Would one of you run down and get a bucket of water?"

Astrid was kind of staring, but quickly broke out of her trance.

She ran off and I waited with the dragon, who shifted. The wind swirled around us, reminding me horribly of another day, with another dragon. I swallowed, tears pricking my eyes.

Hiccup doesn't cry, I told myself as Astrid returned with a bucket filled to the brim with water.

I took it from her with a quick thanks and began slowly washing the injury.

The dragon shifted again, growling angrily.

"Hey!" I cried. "I'm not hurting you on purpose!"

She stopped growling, looking surprised.

I quickly began bathing the cut again, before she could get angry.

When I was done, I stitched her up and watched as she slowly spread the great white wings.

"You're gonna have to stay here for a few days," I told her wearily. "But it's better than death."

The white Night Fury nodded.

Seeing her bright, large yellow eyes made me want to cry, but I held back.

\_I'm thinking of you, a year ago, today,\_

\_Did you feel ok?\_

\_And did you think,\_

"\_This is the end"?\_

\_Or did it come too quickly,\_

\_For you to think at all?\_

\_Did you know,\_

\_That I'm missing you?\_

\_Every second of every day,\_

\_I'm thinking of you,\_

\_Are you okay?\_

\_I'm thinking of you, a year ago, today,\_

\_Did you feel ok?\_

### 3. Chapter 3

Astrid stared at me in complete shock.

"Hiccup!"

"What?"

"Hiccup!"

"WHAT?"

She grabbed my wrist and physically dragged me away from the snowy white dragon and Camicazi, who was greeting the Night Fury as though this was all in a day's work for a Viking.

"Hiccup!" Astrid socked me on the shoulder. I'd learned early on she had a bad habit of doing that. She claimed she does it to show affection, but she almost always does it when I'm being stupid, and it never feels very affectionate.

"Why'd you heal it? You could have died! How did you even get close to it? Why didn't you kill it?"

"It's a her," I told her harshly. "And you know what, that dragon is gonna stay with us until she can fly again. Ok?"

There was a silence, except Astrid's ragged breathing and my own.

"Fine," Astrid said coolly. "May Thor rot you, but fine."

I watched as she walked away and Camicazi came up to me. "Disagree withâ€|theâ€|Astrid?"

I nodded. Then I said, "She's staying with us, Camicazi. Until she can fly again, the dragon can stay with us. If you like," I added hurriedly to the dragon.

She nodded, giving her wings an experimental stretch. She winced.

"Yeah, you won't be flying for awhile," I told her. "But the good news is you're not losing the power of flight indefinitely."

She nodded happily, and I sensed her excitement about getting up in the air again.

I wondered, if, maybe if it had just been a wing injury, would he have flown away once it healed?

Would I have had time to figure out how to treat it before it got infected and he died?

Would I have?

I wonder what he might have thought about this Night Furyâ€¦|

\_I'm missing you, \_

\_Every second of every day, \_

\_And I'm seriously wondering, \_

\_Yeah, I need to know, \_

\_Wherever you are, \_

\_Wherever you have gone, \_

\_Are you okay? \_

\_I miss you, \_

\_And I need you, \_

\_But you left me all alone. \_

\_It's hard to blame you, though, \_

\_I should've known it was coming to an end. \_

You know things are bad when your own song lyrics echo in your head.

\* \* \*

><p>I mentally named the dragon 'Snowy' but I never called her that.<p>

I never ventured any closer to her than I had to, and I never did anything openly friendly, just small stuff, like extra fish at dinner.

Fishlegs and Tantrum had had choice words for me upon seeing that we'd returned with a dragon, but I didn't care.

I guess now would be a good time to tell you I'm kind of the leader of our group. Not a leader, exactly, because if I led, no one would follow, but more of the decision-maker. And believe me, our group needs one.

It's not like I order the other teens around or anything.

It's just, a lot of the time, they trust my judgement.

Astrid was still suspicious about how I had managed to get close enough to heal her damaged wing.

"Most dragons are incredibly suspicious, it would take months â€" possibly even years â€" to earn their trust! How did you earn her trust in a matter of minutes?"

"It's not trust," I told her. "Trust is when she lowers her head to

let me climb on her back." In my hasty defense of myself, however, I have said too much.

I quickly covered my mouth as Astrid said, "Well, how would you know that? All your tribe ever did was kill dragons, just like the others!"

"Uhâ€¦I read about it in a book somewhere," I lied quickly. I didn't feel any regret at the lie. What was my business was my business.

She snorted. "I doubt Vikings have any books at all, and even if they did, I highly doubt one would be on dragon trust."

I swallowed.

"Why don't you just tell me â€" or anyone, really â€" the truth, Hiccup?" Astrid demanded of me wearily. "I mean, for Odin's sake, we've all trusted you with our stories! When I was all alone, here, you helped me. That led me to think you were a good person, but whenever anybody tried to ask you about your exile, you'd clam up. And, at times, when the discussion turned to dragons or something, you'd blurt out random facts that a dragon killer would not know."

There was a silence.

"No one can even get close enough to one without it trying to kill them."

Another silence.

I swallowed. "Look, Astrid. My name is Hiccup. I'm sixteen years old. And get the hell out of the rest of my business, cuz' I think you missed the \_my\_."

She drew back like I'd just slapped her and shoved her bangs out of her face. "Listen to me, you idiot!" she snapped. "You can't live in secrets and lies forever! You can't keep walking away from your past! What if you got kicked out for murdering somebody, just like Camicazi?"

"Camicazi started murdering because of those SICK FREAKS!" I howled back at her. "Yes, she was responsible for her actions, but she was scared!"

There was another long silence as I caught my breath and Astrid stared at me.

I turned to walk away with Astrid's words echoing in my ears: \_You can't live in secrets and lies forever. You can't keep walking away from your past.\_

Watch me.

#### 4. Chapter 4

I watched Snowy fly away and mumbled to myself, "Bye, Snowy." It was the second time her name had ever passed my lips, and I swore it



would be the last.

I would forget about dragons. I would throw away all my notes on them and I would stop blurting out those stupid, random facts about them without thinking.

Astrid was getting suspicious, and that meant the other teens couldn't be far behind.

Tantrum came to stand beside me as I took my dagger out of my belt and began absently playing with it.

The blade slipped and it left a long, thin cut running down my palm.

I winced and used the end of my long-sleeved green shirt to soak up the blood.

Tantrum crossed her arms. "She left quick."

"I don't think she trusted us."

"She trusted you."

"Not really."

Tantrum shrugged and let the matter drop. She looked stunning today in a white dress and letting her blood-red hair flow freely down her back, spilling over her shoulders.

That was what I liked about Tantrum: she was always letting the matter drop if you didn't want to talk about it.

"Hiccupâ€|" she said slowly. "â€|What really \_did \_happen to get you placed in exile?"

I shook my head.

She said quietly, "Only Astrid reckons you murdered somebody."

"Astrid can kiss my butt."

Tantrum chuckled. "You argue with her a lot."

"Because she needs someone to chop down her ego, not stroke it."

"Hiccupâ€|"

"She's aggressive and bloodthirstyâ€"

"She's just a little abrasive."

"â€"She's so freaking in your faceâ€"

"Well, a little."

"â€"She sticks her nose into people's businessâ€"

"Only when she thinks they're hiding something."

"And she shouldn't."

"Sounds a bit like you like her."

"I hate her."

"You sure about that?"

"Yes."

"Then why do you put up with her?"

"She needs somewhere to go."

There was a silence.

"And she's always decking people! What's up with that?" I demanded.

Tantrum laughed. "Ok, you have a point there."

Astrid came up behind us. "Been talking about me, have you?"

I turned to look at her and raised one eyebrow. "Got better things to do than talk about self-absorbed little rich girls."

"And I bet Tantrum's got better things to do than hang around petty criminals."

"Oh, like your dad?" I knew it was going a bit far.

"Let's talk about YOUR dad," Astrid flared. "He's supposed to be some big chief, right? Well, he sounded like a pretty good chief, but exiling his own son? He really failed in the father department."

I stood there, frozen, my fists clenching and unclenching at my sides.

Then I started running away.

"Yeah, run away, Hiccup!" Astrid called after me. "It's what you do best!"

And I ran. Because she was right. It is what I do best. And it's the only thing I know how to do.

## 5. Chapter 5

**\*\*A/N: AAAAAAAND Hiccup's big secret is out and the story is almost over. ;-) Yeah, this chapter's kinda long but it explains everything. \*\***

When I got back later that night, I saw the other teens had started a campfire and were huddled around it for warmth, cooking some fish.

I plopped down as far as I could away from Astrid and watched the others eat, chatter and laugh.

Tantrum and Camicazi offered me food, but I turned them down.

Eventually, Astrid said, "Well, I'm going to bed. Good night, guys."

"'Night," the others chorused.

I crawled over to her, away from the light and warmth and chatter, and stared up at the starry roof of our home.

You might think it's great to survive all alone, with no parents. But the truth is, it sucks. All I want is somebody else to be in charge, somebody else to take care of things and kiss my forehead and ruffle my hair and tell me everything is gonna be alright.

Someone who will love me like a parent and ask if I'm okay and hold me when I'm having bad dreams.

But don't you dare tell anyone I ever said that.

I reached out for Astrid and let my fingers rove over hers for a second.

There was a silence.

"Was that your version of apology?" her voice startled me out of my thoughts.

"No," I replied. "I don't apologize. It could complicate things. When apologies are exchanged, people tend to get mushy. I'm not gonna let myself be turned into a marshmallow."

"Great motto." I heard a smile in Astrid's voice.

"You know, I did murder somebody."

"What?" Astrid sat straight up, staring avidly at me.

I stared up at the sky. "I did, more or less. It was my fault he died."

"Whatâ€¦howâ€¦?"

"Just thought you should know," I said quietly. "But I won't kill you in your sleep. I'm really quite civil like that."

\* \* \*

><p><em>I miss youâ€¦<em>

\_I miss youâ€¦\_

\_Do you know how much guilt I feel?\_

\_Toothless gave one last, desperate roarâ€¦\_

\_Toothless pushed his snout into my handâ€¦\_

\_Dad screamed,  
"EXILE!"\_

\_Toothlessâ€|Toothlessâ€|Toothlessâ€|\_

\_Tears streamed down my face and I didn't care that Hiccup doesn't cry, because to be honest, I really needed some time to cry and be weak.\_

\_Back to being strong, tough-as-nails Hiccup later, maybe.\_

\_Right now, I just really needed to cryâ€|\_

"Hiccup." Her voice wandered into my dream and I woke with a start.

"Huhâ€|Whaâ€|Astrid?"

"You needed to wake up." she told me tonelessly.

Reaching up to swipe my bangs out of my eyes, I blinked and felt wetness in my eyes.

Touching my cheek, I felt tear tracks.

Apparently, strong, tough-as-nails Hiccup does cry sometimes.

Astrid tactfully refrained from saying much, but she faced with me a very frank expression on her face. "So, who's Toothless?"

"What?"

"Who's Toothless?"

I considered telling her a lieâ€|I considered yelling at her again, like I'd done just last nightâ€|I even considered running away again.

But finally, I just said with a small little sigh, "Go get the others. Cuz' I'm only gonna tell this story once."

\* \* \*

><p>"When I was born, I was a runt, like Fishlegs. And because I was a runt, a lot of people bullied me. My dad had really high expectations of me and I could never meet them.<p>

I wasn't happy. I wasn't happy with myself or with my life. As a matter of fact, I couldn't stand myself. And the bullying got so bad I literally began playing with the idea of running away."

I didn't want them to think I was too weak to handle a little bullying, though, so I stopped talking about that. "And, you know, the only way to prove you're a true Viking is by killing a dragon. I wanted acceptance so badly that I became obsessed with the idea of killing a dragon.

I think only Gobber â€" the blacksmith, I was apprenticed to him â€" I think only he really realized I was taking my obsession too

far.

And one day, the dragons attacked againâ€|and I shot down a Night Fury." My voice slipped several octaves lower as I talked, willing myself not to break down again. "Nobody believed I'd done it, so I went to look for himâ€|and found him in the forest. But he wasn't dead."

Tantrum gave a little gasp then.

"So I tried to kill him." I was speaking more to the gritty sand on this beach than the group, now. "Andâ€|I couldn't. I couldn't, or wouldn't kill that dragon."

"And I went home and found out Dad had already signed me up for dragon training classesâ€|your tribes have them too, right?"

The other teens all nodded, and I continued. "So I began befriendingâ€|him. Toothless. And after awhile, people started taking notice of how good I was getting in dragon training, thanks to Toothless." My voice trembled noticeably on my dragon's name.

"You called the dragon Toothless?" Tantrum interrupted, blinking. "What, did he have no teeth?"

"No, he had retractable teeth," I told her. "I used some tricks I knew about him on other dragons and it worked. So I became pretty good in dragon trainingâ€|but then it all went wrong."

My voice dropped to a near whisper as I began telling the truth, for once. "Toothless flew me to the dragon's nest. There was thisâ€|thing inside there; it wasâ€|I thought it was going to kill us. It was bigger than anything you've ever seen. And then, the next day, I was given the 'honor' of killing my first dragon in front of the entire village. I tried calming the Monstrous Nightmare, and it workedâ€|and then I decided to take a step to prove I wouldn't hurt him and I threw off my helmet."

Astrid covered her mouth with one hand. Defying Viking traditions almost always mean death.

"I told the dragon I wasn't one of them. Dad got so madâ€|he banged his hammer and it upset the Nightmare, so it began trying to burn me."

I could lie to them, now. I could stop the story right in its tracks.

>"Toothless sensed danger and came to my rescueâ€|and Dad put a muzzle on him and chained him up."<p>

I finished the story I had never, ever told. "Dadâ€|he disowned me." My voice was a whisper, and I sensed a few of them shrinking away from me. "He went to look for the dragon's nest, with Toothless, for only a dragon can find the islandâ€|and he found it. Oh, he found it, all right, but he barely escaped with his life. Half his men were killed and the other half wounded."

"He came back, patched up his warrior's wounds, and then banished me."

There was a silence. "I kept asking him to let Toothless go, Iâ€¦I promised \_him Toothless wouldn't hurt anybodyâ€¦"

I started crying right then and there, but I couldn't make myself care about looking weak. My best friend was dead. How could I care about something as trivial as tears? "But he didn't listenâ€¦he wouldn't listen, he just killed Toothlessâ€¦"

Tantrum came over and reached out her arms to hug me.

I pulled away from her. "And then he sent me away. And here I am."

For a long time, there was nothing but the sound of my tears. Until at last I raised my head, swiped at my eyes and made to stand up.

Tantrum took my hand and tugged me back down. "Hiccupâ€¦"

"You never told usâ€¦"

"You befriended a dragon?"

"I never knew," Astrid whispered hoarsely. "I never knew that's what had happenedâ€¦I just always assumedâ€¦"

"Befriending a dragon isn't possible," Fishlegs said. "I mean, much less a Night Fury! They're the unholy offspring of lightning and death!"

"No, they're not," I said quietly. "You all witnessed that albino Night Fury. She didn't try to kill us, or anything. Dragons are good. Really."

There was silence as the others pondered this.

I swallowed. "Now you all know. And that's why I never told you before."

I stood up and started walking away then broke into a run. Because, like I said before, that's what I do: run.

## 6. Chapter 6

**\*\*A/N: Last chapter. :-) Hope you all enjoyed this as much as I did!\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>A few hours later, Astrid found me, crouched at the edge of the ocean, watching the sun set.<p>

She sat down beside me.

"You know that two days and a year ago was when Toothless died?" I said the words as casually as I could, staring out at the setting sun, glinting off the ocean.

I crawled closer to the edge of the ocean, but she stayed back.

The wind swirled around us as she stared at me and I stared back.

She shoved her bangs away from her face. "Oh, Hiccup!"

"I wish I could've done something for him, you know?" I asked. "Just to show people they can't control me, and that I haven't forgotten him. Just so they'd know. I think he'd really appreciate that, don't you?" And I was crying again. I swear I don't why I was; I guess it was all the talk of my best friend, who had been gone for over a year now and it was finally getting to me.

All that grief and hurt and anger that I had shoved aside was sneaking back up on me.

Astrid said quietly, "I never knew. I never knew that's why you'd gotten kicked out. I always assumed you'd done something to deserve it, like murdering somebody."

I gave a dry chuckle. "I shot him down. Had I let him stay up in that sky, he would still be free today."

"Yep," Astrid agreed. There was a silence.

"So, in the end, I did murder somebody," I admitted.

"It wasn't your fault. You didn't kill him."

"I might as well have."

"You didn't." Her hands were suddenly on my shoulders, warm through the thin fabric of my shirt.

I wanted to pull her closer to me, after spending all this time pushing people away.

I pulled away from her touch and said quietly, "I wrote a song for him. Called it 'I miss you'."

"How'd it go?"

"I'm looking out to sea,

I'm thinking hard,

Thinking about you,

What was it like for you,

Before your life went dark?"

Why was I singing it to her? Don't know. Don't even care.

But I kept singing.

"I miss you,

I miss you,

It's you who occupies my thoughts today,

Did you feel okay?

Just before the lights went out?

Just before your candle was snuffed out.

I'm asking you this now.

Cuz' I'm thinking of you, a year ago, today,

Did you feel ok?"

I nearly stopped singing there, but I forced myself to keep going. No more secrets. No more lies.

"And do you know,

This has torn me all apart?

I tried to plead with them,

I tried, I tried,

Please accept that miserable offering from my broken heart.

"I know what I did,

And I know what I've done,

And I know that once your fire burned,

Brighter and hotter than any sun.

"Now your fire has been doused,

And you're slowly drowning in the water,

I dived in to save you, but,

I just could not get close enough.

"They never listened to me.

I tried to save you,

Please, please, pleaseâ€¦

I tried.

"I miss you,

I miss you,

It's you who occupies my thoughts today,

Did you feel ok,

Just before the light went out,



Just before your candle was snuffed out?

I'm asking you this now,

Cuz' I'm thinking of you, a year ago, today,

Did you feel ok?

"And did you think,

'This is the end'?

Or did it come too quickly,

For you to think at all?

"And did you find,

That death was better than life?

Have you looked down from heaven,

And seen on earth,

Just how much I miss you,

Do you see now how much you meant to me,

How much you're worth?

"And if you were to come back down,

And fix up your grave,

That would be perfect,

That'll be the day.

"Did you know,

That I'm missing you,

Every second of every day?

I'm thinking of you,

Are you okay?

I'm thinking of you, a year ago, today,

Did you feel ok?"

End  
file.